



city of  
**greenville**

# News Release

## **GREENVILLE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT URGES RESIDENTS TO CELEBRATE SAFELY**

**(Greenville SC)** In conjunction with the State Fire Marshal's Office, the Greenville City Fire Department (GCFD) is urging citizens to stay safe as they celebrate over the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday weekend. "Ideally, we would like for our residents to take advantage of the opportunity to attend the Wells Fargo Red, White and Blue festival and enjoy one of the state's largest professional fireworks displays, rather than using fireworks themselves," said Will Broschious, GCFD's community risk reduction coordinator. "However, because we realize that some of our citizens will choose to use consumer fireworks, we encourage them to make informed purchases and to take the appropriate precautions to keep themselves and their loved ones safe."

According to Broschious, you must be 16 or older to purchase fireworks, and you should only purchase them from an approved fireworks retailer. Fireworks cannot be sold from a tent or vehicle, and all fireworks stands must be inspected by the State Fire Marshal's Office. Once a fireworks stand passes the state inspection, GCFD is notified and performs its own inspection to ensure that the building has a fire extinguisher, that there are no flammable liquids being stored inside the building and that the building meets the City's overall safety regulations. Approved fireworks stands should have two permits – one posted on the outside of the stand, and one posted inside the stand, along with a retail license. Additionally, fireworks sold to the public can only have 50 milligrams or less of pyrotechnic composition per firework, so fireworks such as M-80s and Cherry Bombs are illegal. Both illegal fireworks and fireworks from an unlicensed stand can be confiscated by law enforcement or the State Fire Marshal.

For those choosing to use consumer fireworks, the State Fire Marshal's Office has provided the following safety tips:

- Observe local laws. If unsure whether it is legal to use fireworks, check with local officials.
- Buy from fireworks retailers permitted through the Fire Marshal's Office.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- Always have an adult present when shooting fireworks.
- Use common sense and always read and follow the directions on each firework.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Only use fireworks outdoors, away from homes, dry grass, and trees.
- Light one firework at a time and keep a safe distance.
- Never experiment or attempt to make your own fireworks.
- Never give fireworks to small children.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
- Never re-ignite malfunctioning fireworks.
- Put used fireworks in a bucket of water; keep a garden hose on hand.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, each July 4th, thousands of people, most often children and teens, are injured while using consumer fireworks. Additionally, fireworks cause an average of nearly 20,000 reported fires per year. "Even sparklers burn hot enough to cause third-degree burns," said Broschious. "So rather than taking a chance, we strongly advise our citizens to play it safe and let the experts handle the fireworks show."

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**Contact:** Steve Whitman  
Fire Marshal  
864-467-4454  
864-444-7602  
[swhitman@greenvillesc.gov](mailto:swhitman@greenvillesc.gov)